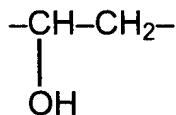


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

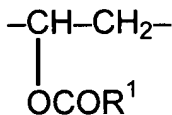
1. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element comprising

- (a) ~~an optionally pre-treated~~ a substrate; and
- (b) ~~a positive working heat sensitive coating on the substrate, the coating comprising~~
 - (i) at least one novolak resin,
 - (ii) at least one component ~~which that~~ reduces the aqueous alkaline developer solubility of novolak, wherein said reduction in solubility is reversed upon the application of heat, and
 - (iii) at least one ~~acidic~~ polyvinyl acetal comprising the structural units (A), (B), (C)

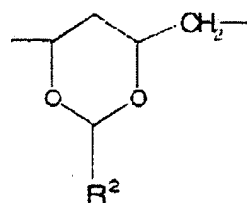
(A)



(B)

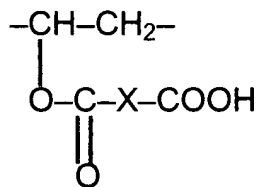


(C)

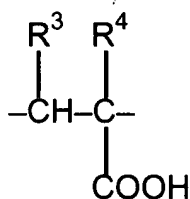


and (D), wherein (D) is at least one unit selected from (D-1), (D-2), and (D-3):

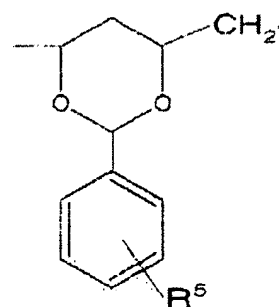
(D-1)



(D-2)



(D-3)

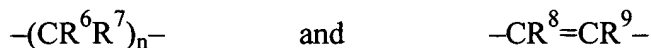


wherein

R^1 is a hydrogen atom or a C_1 - C_4 alkyl group, R^2 is a hydrogen atom or a C_1 - C_{18} alkyl group, R^3 is a hydrogen atom or a C_1 - C_4 alkyl group, R^4 is a hydrogen atom or a C_1 - C_4 alkyl group, R^5 is $-\text{COOH}$, $-(\text{CH}_2)_a-\text{COOH}$, $-\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2)_a-\text{COOH}$, $-\text{SO}_3\text{H}$, $-\text{PO}_3\text{H}_2$ or $-$

PO_4H_2 ,

a is an integer from 1 to 8, and X is selected from



wherein n is an integer from 1 to 6,

each R^6 and R^7 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom and a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group, and

R^8 and R^9 are independently selected from a hydrogen atom and a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group or R^8 and R^9 , together with the two carbon atoms to which they are bonded, form an optionally a substituted or unsubstituted aryl or heteroaryl group;

~~wherein components (i) and (ii) do not have to be present as separate substances but may be used in the form of an appropriately functionalized novolak.~~

2. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 1, wherein component (ii) of ~~the heat-sensitive coating~~ is selected from cyanine dyes, triarylmethane dyes, quinolinium compounds, insolubilizers with ketone or sulfone group(s) and novolaks functionalized with substituents capable of forming a four-center hydrogen bridge bond.
3. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the structural units (A), (B), (C) and (D) are present in the following amounts in the polyvinyl acetal, based on the weight of the polyvinyl acetal:
 - (A) 10 to 40 wt.-%
 - (B) 0.1 to 25 wt.-%
 - (C) 10 to 80 wt.-%
 - (D) 1 to 40 wt.-%
4. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims claim 1 to 3~~, wherein the polyvinyl acetal has an acid number of 10 to 160 mg KOH/g polymer.
5. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims claim 1 to 4~~, wherein R^1 is $-\text{CH}_3$.

6. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 5, wherein R^2 is $-(CH_2)_2CH_3$.
7. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 6, wherein unit D has the formula D-1.
8. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 7, wherein X is ~~selected from~~ $-CH=CH-$.
9. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 6, wherein unit D has the formula D-2.
10. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 9, wherein R^3 and R^4 are ~~each a hydrogen atom~~.
11. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 6, wherein unit D has the formula D-3.
12. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 11, wherein R^5 is ~~selected from~~ $-COOH$.
13. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 12, wherein the novolak resin is present in an amount of 40 to 95 wt.-%, based on the dry ~~layer~~ weight of the coating.
14. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 13, wherein the component (ii) is present in an amount of 0.1 to 25 wt.-%, based on the dry ~~layer~~ weight of the coating.
15. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ 1 to 14, wherein the polyvinyl acetal is present in an amount of 5 to 25 wt.-%, based on the dry ~~layer~~ weight of the coating.

16. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 15, wherein the ~~heat-sensitive~~ coating comprises at least one substance capable of absorbing radiation with a wavelength in the range of 750 to 1120 nm and converting it to heat.
17. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 16, wherein the ~~heat-sensitive layer coating~~ furthermore comprises at least one additive selected from polymer particles, surfactants, contrast ~~dyes or dyes~~, pigments, ~~and or~~ plasticizers.
18. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~any of claims 1 to 16~~, wherein said element ~~being is~~ a lithographic printing plate precursor.
19. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to claim 18, wherein the substrate is an aluminum substrate ~~which prior to coating with the heat-sensitive coating was subjected to~~ at least one ~~treatment~~ pre-treatment selected from (a) mechanical and/or chemical roughening, (b) anodizing ~~and or~~ (c) application of a hydrophilizing layer.
20. (Currently amended) Heat-sensitive element according to ~~claim 18 or 19~~ 1, wherein ~~the dry layer weight of the heat-sensitive layer is 0.5 to 4.0 g/m²~~ components (i) and (ii) are provided in the form of an appropriately functionalized novolak resin.
21. – 25. (Cancelled)